

Remarks

Claims 1-11 were pending for examination. Claims 1-11 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 12-34 have been added. Support for new claims 12-22 can be found, for example, in original claims 1-7 and Figure 1. Support for new claims 23-33 can be found, for example, in original claims 8-10 and Figure 1. Support for new claim 34 can be found, for example, in original claim 11 and Figure 1. No new matter has been introduced.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,858,044 (Nepsund) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,747,303 (Jordan), or U.S. Patent No. 4,128,408 (Poole) in view of Jordan. As previously noted, claims 1-11 have been canceled. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is solicited.

New Claims 12-34

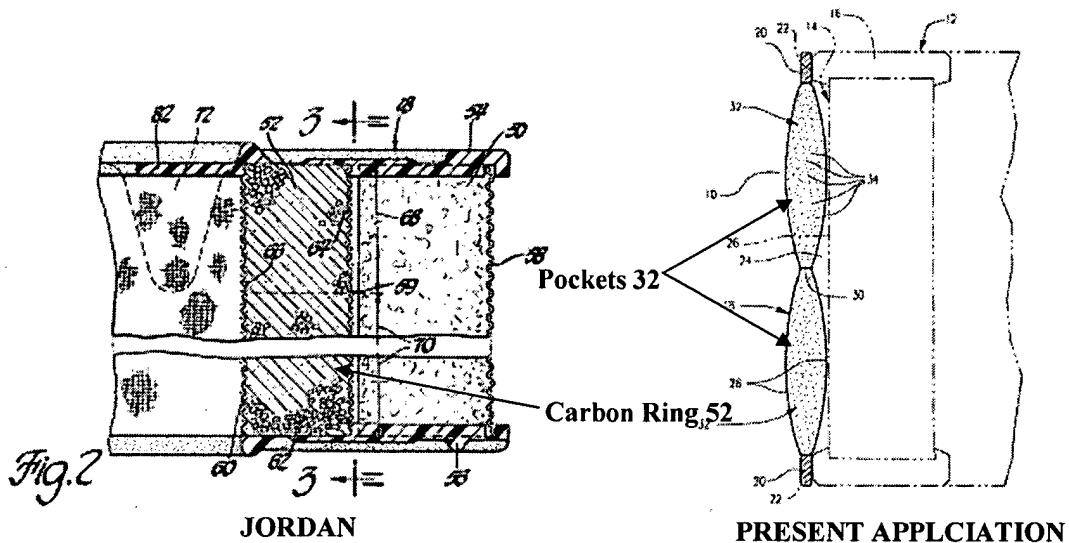
New claims 12-34 have been introduced to more fully recite various features of the present invention. Specifically, claims 12-34 recite a cover including laminae of overlapping flexible material, the laminae being secured along boundaries to define a plurality of pockets. A carbon media is carried within these pockets, such as carbon pellets or a carbon impregnated fibrous matrix segment, so as to perform a hydrocarbon emission reduction function not carried out by conventional air filters. As discussed below, no such structure is taught or suggested by the presently cited prior art: Nepsund, Poole, and Jordan.

The Office Action acknowledges on page 3 that both Nepsund and Poole fail to disclose or suggest a carbon media for reducing hydrocarbon emissions as claimed. The Office Action asserts, however, that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Nepsund or Poole to include a carbon media as taught by Jordan, thereby achieving the presently claimed invention. To the contrary, Jordan fails to disclose or suggest

carrying a carbon media *within* pockets of a laminae of overlapping flexible material as claimed. Instead, Jordan states:

Carbon ring 52 is comprised of activated carbon particles 62, here of a 6 x 16-mesh charcoal, only the proximate tips of which are secured by a polyethylene binder to leave substantial surface area for hydrocarbon absorption and inter-particule volume for air passage.

Jordan, col. 2, ll. 45-50. In other words, Jordan discloses a carbon ring 52 formed of a mesh charcoal which is secured between annular top and bottom end caps 54 and 56 of the cartridge 18. See, for example, Figure 2 in Jordan provided next to Figure 3 from the present application to illustrate the significant structural differences.



As is demonstrated by Figure 2, nothing in Jordan discloses or suggests a carbon media provided in pockets as claimed. Thus, even if Nepsund or Poole were modified to include a "carbon ring" as taught by Jordan, one still would not achieve the presently claimed invention which specifically calls for a carbon media provided in pockets. Instead, one would have a

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conventional air filter including a carbon ring. For at least these reasons, new claims 12-34 are believed to be allowable.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. If the Examiner does not agree, then a personal or telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues so as to expedite the eventual allowance of the claims.

A Petition for Extension of Time is submitted concurrently herewith. Should any additional fees be required, please charge such fees to Steptoe & Johnson LLP Deposit Account No. 19-4293.

Date: *6/12/06*

Respectfully Submitted,



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Enclosure